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ABSTRACT

The interaction of a university and the society is described in a case study of the system of public examinations of Melbourne University in Victoria (Australia). The initial desire to guarantee the academic standards of college entrants grew into a system that also provided school leaving certificates for those not entering the university. Over a century of struggle between humanitarian and utilitarian attitudes to education is portrayed, showing how public opinion gradually pushed the education system further toward utilitarianism. The influence of the examination system on the entire educational system in Victoria is traced. The historical and cultural background of these examinations is described, focusing on the various interest groups involved and the cultural changes in the schools as a result of changes in the examination system. Seven appendixes present seven tables of statistics on examinations and university entrants for the period. (Contains 93 references.) (SLD)

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